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President: Ms. Marie Chatardova ..... (Czechia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*)

(c) Development Cooperation Forum (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Alonso** (Professor of Applied Economics at Complutense University of Madrid), initiating the collective debriefing session on the key messages received thus far in the Development Cooperation Forum, expressed concern at the current state of the development cooperation system. It was worth considering early initiatives in the field, such as the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund, which had been based on very simple rules, and were multilateral and centralized, with developing countries involved in financing and decision-making. However, development cooperation had since been reduced to official development assistance (ODA), and there had been a shift towards a bilateral system with the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at its centre. It was necessary to reshape the system, and the origins of development cooperation policy could be used to inspire the reform. The first step in driving international support to serve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was to expand and democratize the system to include both provider and recipient countries. The new system should coordinate all actors to ensure that their proposals and interests were aligned around a set of shared objectives and that all efforts were oriented in a strategic direction, which could only be achieved through collective action. More time should be dedicated to exploring how to build a framework of soft elements to incentivize coordination among actors in an effective and transparent manner.

2. Development cooperation not only had financial requirements, but also implied sharing experience, finding innovative solutions, building capacities and mobilizing political will in different areas. To make the Sustainable Development Goals a reality, the international community must build an effective and transformative global development policy based on coherence between domestic and international policies, with improved alignment between development cooperation and national plans. ODA was an important part of development financing, and could finance investment with high social returns, even if private returns were low. However, many donors wanted to convert it into a mechanism for leveraging private resources, which led to two problems. First, there was a lack of procedures for determining when official resources were complementary to private resources, which could lead to subsidizing private investment and distorting markets. Also, it would be difficult to achieve alignment between public and private priorities, as the orientation of international official funds towards those who were left behind was unlikely to offer mass prospects of short-term commercial returns. Nonetheless, private sector contributions to the 2030 Agenda were crucial. Therefore, public investment in support of the private sector in areas that supported development should be enhanced to offer a more consistent way of ensuring policy coherence.

3. **Mr. Glennie** (Independent Researcher and Writer) said that over the past three years, the 2030 Agenda had become embedded into all discussions relating to aid and development cooperation. The focus on leaving no one behind, inequality between countries and within countries, women and youth, partnerships with multiple stakeholders and the role of the private sector was stronger than ever. The voices of partners from the South had become much bolder, changing attitudes and debates on aid and development cooperation. He expressed concern regarding the role of private money and the subsidizing of private finance with aid. Some $10 billion in ODA was spent every year subsidizing the private sector compared to $500 million spent on domestic resource mobilization, which highlighted a major problem in the way aid was focused from the North. Research had shown that unless there was ownership in recipient countries, there would be no sustainable gains. However, there had been a reduction in the focus on ownership and participation and accountability at the national level in decision-making and implementation of strategies, and attitudes suggested that there had been a loss of momentum. As an example of the remaining challenges, the use of the terms "developed" and "developing" countries was very old-fashioned. While South-South cooperation and participation by the South had strengthened, more remained to be done. The North needed to listen more, and the South needed to be bolder in presenting its expertise, for example on issues of fragility and conflict, with which it had direct experience. The concept of South-South cooperation and horizontality therefore needed to be more firmly embedded. A stronger sense of accountability was necessary, both for South-South cooperation and traditional aid. Personal input and decisions made had an impact in the processes of building and reshaping multilateralism.

Session 4: "Leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development: on the road to the second United Nations conference on South-South cooperation"

4. **Ms. Sidiropoulos** (Chief Executive of the South African Institute of International Affairs), moderator, said that since its origins, South-South cooperation had

made great progress, and was a key dimension of the discussion around sustainable development. The session would focus on the orientation of South-South and triangular cooperation towards building sustainable development frameworks and their comparative advantages; the non-financial strengths of development cooperation, particularly South-South cooperation; sharing experience and best practices between all countries; and the expansion of South-South cooperation. That was a voluntary process and set of engagements, and should not be confused with the responsibilities of North-South cooperation.

5. **Mr. Raimondi** (Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina), panellist, said that the second United Nations conference on South-South cooperation had great symbolic value for his country, and would provide a framework conducive to progress in several areas. South-South cooperation could be strengthened by being integrated into national development policies and programmes, in order to enhance the abilities of governmental organizations. Regional platforms such as the Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation could contribute to institutional developments and methodologies. It was necessary to assess the best ways in which the United Nations could support such efforts, for example by helping to establish focal points for cooperation, assessing opportunities for the creation of programmes and facilitating partnerships. Triangular and decentralized cooperation frameworks that were sufficiently flexible to allow a wide range of development actors to be involved could be promoted, in line with the new sustainable development agenda. The approach to triangular cooperation must be based on political dialogue and institutional coordination to encourage cooperation agreements in key areas including science, technology and innovation, food security, climate change, disaster risk reduction and gender equality. Decentralized cooperation could also contribute to the effective localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, facilitating the creation of networks and platforms between cities to share experience and knowledge and to increase the involvement of civil society organizations. By improving interregional collaboration there was great potential for the establishment of networks and revision mechanisms between peers, and the coordination of positions in global forums. The work that could be carried out by civil society, multilateral development banks, the private sector and academia could also contribute new skills and forge new connections.

6. Improving the ways in which institutions handled international cooperation and established analysis and information-gathering mechanisms was essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and would strengthen management processes, planning and focusing of resources. Striking a balance between social, economic and environmental aspects would require a transition from the traditional sectoral approach towards increased levels of institutional coordination throughout the project management cycle. Solid political agreements were essential to progress, and Member States must play a proactive role in multilateral discussions and establish better channels for interregional dialogue, identifying areas where consensus could be reached and transforming them into broader agreements, while making the most of the inputs generated by discussions in academia. Argentina would work together with the President of the General Assembly, co-facilitators and all actors involved to build bridges between parties, identify shared work streams and create conditions for constructive dialogue.

7. **Mr. Chenggang** (Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Commerce of China), panellist, said that over the past four decades, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries had achieved remarkable results in terms of promoting technical cooperation among developing countries and advancing South-South cooperation at the global level. China remained committed to reform and to development, including through innovation, coordination, openness and benefit-sharing to enhance alignment with international economic and trade rules, broaden market access, create an attractive domestic investment environment, and enable its development to benefit other countries. Through cooperation with United Nations development agencies over the past 40 years, China had been able to overcome the bottleneck that was impeding its development, and had made progress in multiple areas including agriculture, industry, energy, environmental protection, poverty reduction, health care for women and children and population development, and had also carried out triangular cooperation with the United Nations in other developing countries with positive results. The support provided by the United Nations had promoted development in China, attesting to the success of the Organization's development cooperation efforts.

8. Development required unrelenting efforts from all countries. The keys to overcoming various challenges were cooperation, commitment and change. All countries needed to uphold the spirit of international cooperation, support multilateralism and work together

in tackling challenges. The gap between the North and the South constituted an unsustainable imbalance in the international economy, and was a source of both turmoil and instability. Poverty reduction should remain the core task of development cooperation. Commitment was necessary, and both developed and developing countries needed to take action to fulfil their respective duties. Developed countries should bear the primary responsibility for development financing, and effectively implement their ODA commitments, particularly through increasing assistance to the least developed countries. While South-South cooperation had played an increasingly important role in international development cooperation in recent years, developing countries could only show the responsibilities corresponding to their level of development and actual capacity. The responsibilities, principles and standards applicable to North-South cooperation should not be imposed on South-South cooperation. Change and innovation were the fundamental forces driving progress.

9. The international community needed to respect the efforts of developing countries to explore their own strategies for providing targeted support, and help them to enhance their own development capacities. Parties to South-South cooperation should be encouraged to enhance experience, share results and jointly explore new ideas for the advancement of South-South cooperation. China had firmly supported and actively participated in South-South cooperation, assisting other developing countries to the best of its ability, through funding and through projects in areas such as infrastructure building, agriculture development, medical care, poverty reduction and capacity-building. Issues of poverty, imbalance and inadequate development remained prominent in China, but development efforts would continue, and he expected the international community to increase cooperation. China would take concrete action to promote economic globalization to benefit people worldwide, including through the China International Import Expo, and would continue to fulfil its assistance commitments and share its development experience with others to help them to implement the 2030 Agenda.

10. **Mr. García-López** (Executive Director of the Mexican Agency of International Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico), panellist, said that Mexico had been working towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by defining a national strategy, including the alignment of programme and budget frameworks; by establishing a national council coordinating federal ministries, local governments and international organizations in consultation with civil society and the private sector; and by creating a specialized technical committee to define and monitor national statistical indicators to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Mexican Agency of International Development Cooperation had played an integral role in defining the strategy and follow-up actions at the national level. International cooperation was an instrument that complemented and strengthened other flows, including the mobilization of fiscal resources, domestic and foreign investment, open and rules-based international trade, sustainable access to credit and technical, horizontal cooperation. While each country was responsible for its own development process, international cooperation was a useful instrument for supporting national development priorities. In accordance with the mandate of the 2030 Agenda, it was essential to build strategies that responded to the specific needs of countries at different stages of their transition towards development.

11. The recent establishment of the network for strengthening of national capacities for the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean aimed to share experience and strengthen capacities of countries in the region and extraregional members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which would help support participation in constructing national strategies, statistical capabilities and the alignment of international cooperation strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals. The second United Nations conference on South-South cooperation would offer the opportunity to join the rest of the cooperation system and provide instruments to tackle the development challenges faced by everyone. The 2030 Agenda had demonstrated that there were certain challenges faced by all countries — migration, gender, climate change and the rise of technology — that could only be tackled by working together and by assisting countries at their various stages of development.

12. The systematization of South-South cooperation required methodologies for effective implementation, aligned with the needs of beneficiaries, and actions must be monitored and evaluated to foster a culture of accountability. It was necessary to take advantage of the strengths of all actors, including civil society, local governments, parliamentarians and the private sector, in the design and implementation of cooperation. There should also be improved coordination with traditional donors to make triangular and trilateral cooperation more efficient and to ensure that traditional and South-South cooperation strengthened one another. It was important to share best practices for cooperation

methodologies, and to work together to build a new paradigm for cooperation. Trilateral cooperation offered new ways of working together horizontally and of cooperating not only with donor countries, but with all partners, including non-governmental organizations and the agencies of the United Nations.

13. **Mr. Almino** (Director of the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation), panellist, said that South-South cooperation needed a strategic focus, on autonomy, sustainability and structural change in particular, and a comprehensive framework, taking into account the different situations in various developing countries.

14. Each country could bring its own strengths to cooperation. Whether contributions were modest, substantial, or non-financial in nature, flexibility was important to ensure that any country could contribute, and to increase the potential for cooperation. Brazil had been working to strengthen institutions for cooperation in developing countries, in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), by examining specific instruments. The principles of South-South cooperation discussed at the Buenos Aires conference were still valid. It was very important for countries to establish systems to quantify, evaluate and measure cooperation, taking into account qualitative aspects. Monetization was not always the most important factor; sometimes the transfer of policies could have very significant results.

15. **Mr. Gehlen** (Head of Division on Effectiveness and Transparency; Quality Standards and International Development Policy of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany), panellist, said that development issues were linked to resources and to knowledge. Changes to the approach to collaboration were necessary in order to share the right knowledge to solve specific problems. In Germany, the main resource was human capacity, and his country traditionally used its experts to help solve problems all over the world. However, expertise on the challenges of poverty reduction and sustainable growth was emerging worldwide. In order to implement development cooperation, Germany had created institutional frameworks and listened to the expertise of countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia and the Philippines, constructing and supporting links between emerging economies and low-income countries, which had been a successful approach. It was therefore very important to find a specific, and not necessarily a traditional, role to play as a development practitioner. Creating and reforming procedures and institutions to show responsibility and to measure impact was crucial, and was being considered in every exercise related to development cooperation. Efficiency was more important than the balance sheet, given that the work related to poverty and the lives of people.

16. **Ms. Padilla** (Executive Director of IBON International Foundation), panellist, said that South-South cooperation was an effective way of rebalancing power relations in international development cooperation. However, it should complement rather than substitute for ODA. The core principles of South-South cooperation should be applied at the national level, and the countries of the South should define their modes of operation. It was important to develop institutionalized mechanisms at the local and national levels in relation to South-South cooperation, and to ensure there was genuine participation by the intended beneficiaries. It was also important to monitor solidarity and democratic ownership. South-South development cooperation must contribute to a comprehensive, locally owned national strategy that developed agriculture, industry and services in an integrated, sustainable manner. There should be democratic frameworks for South-South cooperation to enable Southern countries to define the norms and standards applicable to them, involving the interests of the people throughout the process.

17. **Ms. Cederfelt** (Member of Parliament, Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that the involvement of parliamentarians at the national and international levels was essential in ensuring the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda , particularly with regard to poverty reduction, national ownership, and South-South and triangular cooperation.

18. **Ms. Bayr** (Member of Parliament, Austria), speaking on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, asked panellists to share their views on how the global North could contribute towards a fruitful environment for South-South and triangular cooperation.

19. **Mr. Asthana** (India) said that the purpose of South-South cooperation was not to be a vehicle for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; rather, it was a voluntary partnership based on solidarity and mutual benefit. Developing countries should develop measurement systems that were specific to given projects, with the partners in question determining what should be monitored and evaluated, and whether a project had achieved its goals. Developed countries should better monitor fulfilment of ODA commitments and other forms of support to developing countries, instead of seeking to quantify or focus on evaluation and monitoring. Monitoring, measuring or evaluating needed to be project-specific and should not be situated within a framework of compliance.

20. **Mr. Fialho Rocha** (Cabo Verde) said that his country had experience both as a beneficiary and a participant in South-South and triangular cooperation. He therefore recognized the significant potential of such types of cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and in acting not as a substitute, but as a complement to North-South cooperation. He asked what could be done to increase the efficiency of South-South cooperation and to take it to the level of North-South cooperation with regard to policy delivery, organization, funding and implementation. In triangular cooperation, it was very important to keep the funding, provider and beneficiary partners at the same level. The cost of transportation for technical assistance was a significant issue for South-South cooperation.

21. **Mr. Momeni** (Iran) said that the upcoming conference in Buenos Aires was a critical moment. He asked the panellists to explain their expectations regarding the role of the United Nations system in strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation.

22. **Ms. Vives Balmaña** (Andorra) said that inclusion, integration and attention to the most vulnerable groups were priorities as part of the policy of leaving no one behind. Multilateralism was part of cooperation, and provided the opportunity for visibility, experience and exchange. She asked how coordination could be enhanced between all the entities involved in South-South cooperation.

23. **Mr. González Peña** (Cuba) said that it was important to reiterate that the principles which characterized South-South cooperation were solidarity, complementarity, equality, non-conditionality and respect for sovereignty. South-South cooperation should not be considered as ODA as it was a complement and not a substitute for North-South cooperation. The way in which developed and developing countries were defined was central to the discussion and was one of the reasons the need for strengthened South-South cooperation was being addressed.

24. **Ms. Pape** (European Union) said that South-South cooperation made an important contribution towards the 2030 Agenda. South-South cooperation could be used to assist fragile contexts that had increasing levels of poverty, and the examples of international dialogue for peacebuilding and State-building and the role of the Group of Seven Plus should be considered. As South-South cooperation was complementary and did not replace traditional North-South cooperation, the European Union maintained its commitment to reaching the 0.7 per cent ODA/GNI target, and was determined to promote more trilateral cooperation. The principles of country ownership, results orientation, real partnership and transparency, including reporting on ODA flows, should be observed.

25. **Mr. Nair** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that ILO considered its cooperation with the United Nations system on South-South and triangular cooperation to be very important, and had been valuable in its broader scheme of work. In 2012, ILO had adopted a strategy that addressed various aspects of work, and focused on increasing awareness and capacity-building, and on the wider engagement of stakeholders, with a view to achieving the decent work agenda. Strengthening of South-South cooperation would be discussed at the forthcoming International Labour Conference. There would be a focus on the following areas: advancing the decent work agenda by engaging with an increasing number of governments; addressing emerging needs and trends in international cooperation and cross-regional peer learning in a timely manner; strengthening awareness and capacity of workers and employers; the achievements of regional United Nations initiatives; the decent work agenda across the United Nations system; regional, subregional and interregional programming and networking; contributing to fragile-to-fragile cooperation initiatives; cooperation between least developed countries and small island developing States; and economic development, particularly at the local level.

26. **Ms. Avagyan** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that FAO had set up an information platform for its member countries, showcasing institutions of the South working in the field of food security and agricultural development, and thereby facilitating the sharing of experience and good practices. Finding funds for carrying out exchanges was a challenge, and therefore leveraging the strengths of different State and non-State actors was crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Joint efforts by the Rome-based United Nations agencies had included the creation of a joint road map consisting of a concrete action plan for the lead-up to the second United Nations conference on South-South cooperation. In order to effectively respond to the growing demand for such cooperation, collaboration between organizations and Member States was necessary.

27. **Mr. Fadl** (Sudan) said that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change had led to changes in North-South and South-South cooperation. His Government had collaborated with the UNOSSC and contributed to South-South cooperation, notably in Africa, Asia and the Arab countries. Development continued to be hindered by conflict and the disparities in levels of development in certain regions. Such challenges could

be countered by focusing on successful examples of South-South cooperation, improving policies to allow Sudan to play a broader role in South-South and triangular cooperation, and strengthening institutions and frameworks. Governments should strengthen policies and strategies for development cooperation, and the policy of the Paris Agreement should be applied at the national level with a view to ensuring broader cooperation.

Session 5: "Bridging capacity gaps and facilitating technology development and transfer in strategic areas"

28. **Mr. Lewis** (Assistant Director, Institute for Capacity Development, International Monetary Fund), moderator, said that the discussion would focus on the thematic areas of domestic revenue mobilization and statistics and data, which had been core areas for the Agenda for Development and for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in terms of capacity-building. A major challenge was establishing more integrated national approaches to development revenue mobilization strategies, which could include a long-term perspective articulated in a medium-term revenue strategy, and could be responsive to the short-term revenue and resource needs of countries. Statistics were central to the 2030 Agenda, and were necessary both for monitoring and for delivering progress. Equipping policymakers with statistics and data enabled them to execute and implement the positive change they strived to achieve. He would be interested to hear how development partners could provide support while allowing reforms to be country-led, particularly in the most fragile countries, and how technology could be harnessed to make progress in the areas of revenue mobilization and statistics and data. Another key theme for discussion was sustainability, and how it could be achieved along with ownership by continuing to build on the progress made.

29. **Ms. Akhtar** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), panellist, said that if there was an increase in the pace of implementing global, regional and technical cooperation strategies, resources would emerge to fund the 2030 Agenda . However, there was variation in the approaches, modalities and scope of technical cooperation initiatives, which could lead to some issues. Multilateral development banks and other ODA providers were working to establish institutionalized platforms and initiatives. She wondered whether providers were coordinated to ensure policy consistency and coherence in delivery within the taxation system, and whether allocations were currently adequate.

30. Tax reforms were very costly, and to ensure effective accountability and results, tax reform proposals for domestic resource mobilization should be backed by international financial programmes. It would be helpful for projects to offer tax policy advice as well as looking at whether resources would be raised following tax reform. The 2030 Agenda must address issues of equity, and consider how investment decisions and priorities could be influenced through tax regimes, and how the tax system could be used to address challenges or Sustainable Development Goals that required appropriate pricing mechanisms. In light of ODA limitations, high priority should be given to regions and countries with low tax-to-GDP ratios.

31. She congratulated the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the project "Transforming Tax Systems in Developing Countries: Introducing the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy", which had a comprehensive, modular approach, including tax structure diagnostics supported by policy and tax administration reform proposals. Expanding tax coverage and rationalizing and abolishing generous and distortive tax incentive regimes was critical. Tax evasion opportunities should be curbed, as they led to very high tax expenditure costs. It was important for economies to harness their tax potential, which was linked to how diversified they were, and to their level of formality. Informal economies did not lend themselves to an increase in resource mobilization.

32. There was a significant demand for capacity-building for the implementation of the international base erosion and profit shifting treaty at the national and regional levels. In recent years, the task had been complicated by cross-border value chains, the digital economy and tax competition. Domestic resource mobilization should draw upon the potential of private resources, which would provide a significant contribution to sustainable development. It was therefore necessary to foster capacities to enable a policy environment, and to develop and diversify capital markets. Cross-border cooperation was critical for the promotion of capital flows through harmonization of accepted regulatory norms and standards. In Asia, greater support was needed for market initiatives, and there should be a dedicated platform of capital markets. One important area that was missing from the discussion of domestic resource mobilization was local and municipal finance.

33. **Mr. Watts** (Senior Analyst of Development Initiatives), panellist, said that domestic revenue

mobilization was a key aspect of the 2030 Agenda. However, progress had been insufficient over the previous three years, for reasons including the decline in commodity prices, issues with reforms, and different situations in terms of climate and politics, and presented one of the key policy challenges for developing country governments. Much of the focus on domestic revenue mobilization had been on how to increase the tax-to-GDP ratio and how to build the capacity of revenue authorities. However, there should be greater focus on judicial and regulatory reform, and on the availability of data. An integrated approach should be central to discussions. Revenue mobilization was related to State capacity to deliver services and to have a social contract with citizens and business. At the country level, the focus should be on empowering governments to implement reforms that were specific to their needs.

34. **Mr. Chege** (Chair of the United Nations Statistics Commission), panellist, said that in order to fully implement and monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, high-quality, timely and sufficiently disaggregated data was required. Significant efforts were therefore needed to strengthen data collection and statistical capacity. The Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data provided a road map for the modernization and strengthening of national statistical systems. Challenges remained in terms of coordination between multiple stakeholders and the need for increased domestic resources and international support. It was necessary for countries to align their strategic plans for statistics with the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data. Internationally led efforts should promote an environment in which national statistical authorities were at the centre of initiatives. In order to translate the commitment to leaving no one behind into action, a more precise understanding of the needs and circumstances of target populations was necessary, through access to the relevant data. There should be more investment in skills and technology, both among the national statistics authorities, and at the global level.

35. **Mr. Hollingworth** (President and Chief Executive Officer of the Grameen Foundation), panellist, said that his organization focused consistently on the poor, and particularly on how financial inclusion with other basic services could address poverty. Significant advances in technology had meant that financial services could be delivered at a low cost to the poorest people in the world in remote areas by using mobile money platforms. The availability of digital data information was presenting new opportunities for understanding the issues that poor people faced in a more nuanced and personalized manner. Information on health, agriculture, small business development and financial inclusion could be supplied to outreach workers, supporting organizations and the poor themselves to help optimize the decisions they made. The Grameen Foundation worked primarily in the areas of agriculture, health and digital financial services, and provided technology platforms that aimed to place the poor in networks that offered them access to information. It was important to consider how the poor could be protected, for example, by ensuring that mobile money platforms were interoperable, by having a legislative framework in place, and by developing codes of conduct that promoted transparency, data privacy, complaint resolution, the prevention of indebtedness and pricing for credit. Data offered new opportunities for the poor in terms of their identity and ability to participate in the marketplace.

36. **Ms. Vignolo** (Uruguay) said that since 2005, her country had been promoting inclusive development to reduce inequality and to ensure a good quality of life for the population. However, it was necessary to direct a high volume of financial resources towards social and income distribution policies. Some countries had limited resources, and therefore needed to define their priorities. Uruguay had prioritized eradicating poverty and building a fairer society, and while it had focused less on innovation, science and technology, progress had also been made in those areas. It was necessary to redefine policies in order to move forward and further reduce inequality. More coherence was needed in the United Nations system for the promotion of multidimensional development. Support and cooperation were very important, in terms of knowledge and expertise as well as finance.

37. **Mr. Asthana** (India) said that domestic resource mobilization was in the domain of national sovereignty, and caution should be exercised regarding the extent to which policies were prescribed for countries. The increasingly globalized nature of businesses meant that policies required international cooperation and strengthened institutional arrangements. The implementation of a truly universal agenda would require a platform where all countries had an equal voice on issues relating to international taxation, which only the United Nations could provide. The determining of global taxation standards must be made more inclusive and transparent. The absence of adequate global cooperation on certain issues including money-laundering was a constraint, and international cooperation was needed to address such issues and help all countries towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It was necessary to address the issue of revenue loss in developing countries as a result of the transfer pricing policies of multinationals.

Developing countries were often required to adhere to standards defined by the developed world, and thus his country had advocated stronger international taxation rules and an intergovernmental tax body. A technology facilitation mechanism should be created, which had been called for at the United Nations Conference on the Financing of Development, but had yet to gain traction.

38. **Mr. Abebe** (Ethiopia) said that his country had taken several actions to enhance its domestic resource mobilization capacity, including an initiative on tax transformation for the Sustainable Development Goals, with the objective of enhancing institutional capacity for tax administrations. The issue of limited capacity was a challenge that developing countries continued to face. He asked how international cooperation for developing countries was assessed, and whether it was coordinated, particularly in terms of being consistent with national development priorities.

39. **Ms. Ghartey** (Ghana) said that she would like to hear more about the challenge of controlling expenditure in the context of domestic resource mobilization. She also requested clarification on the methods for measuring ODA under the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development initiative. She highlighted the launch of a national mobile money interoperability system in Ghana.

40. **Mr. Almino** (Brazil) said that it was necessary to bridge capacity gaps and facilitate technology development and transfer in the area of data collection and methodology. In partnership with the United Nations Population Fund and the governments of Cabo Verde and Senegal, Brazil had been creating census dissemination centres using electronic data collection in Africa. The initiative aimed to develop the capacity of statistics institutes in African countries and had the potential to contribute to the generation of reliable data in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

41. **Ms. Mustafa** (Member of Parliament, Jordan), speaking on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that the negotiations between governments and donors regarding tax and financial reforms did not take the specific circumstances of countries into consideration, and led to more people being introduced into the circle of poverty than exiting it. The social aspect of discussions within the forum should not be overlooked.

42. **Mr. Watts** (Senior Analyst of Development Initiatives) said that there was a significant difference in scale between the ODA for domestic resource mobilization and the actual need. How ODA was used and where it should be targeted were areas for consideration, and if ODA was unable to fulfil the requirements to build capacity in certain countries, then other potential methods could be considered. ODA was typically given as technical cooperation, and different providers were contributing different types of systems and capacity-building on different standards, which was leading to fragmentation. Building State capacity was at the heart of domestic revenue mobilization, and it was therefore necessary for States to drive their own reform agenda, which required strong leadership and a strong commitment plan around which development partners could coordinate.

43. **Ms. Akhtar** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) said that the question was how the Sustainable Development Agenda could be mainstreamed within the public expenditure programme. There were serious issues surrounding the misallocation of public expenditure, and in terms of developing effective medium-term expenditure frameworks. Some countries lacked the necessary expertise, and project implementation was often ineffective due to management issues, delays in payment or cases of corruption. In addition to revenue mobilization, public expenditure was necessary. Effective allocation of resources was a starting point, but it was also necessary to have stringent processes, procedures and financial advisors in place to provide oversight on spending.

44. **Mr. Chege** (Chair of the United Nations Statistics Commission) said that the contribution of Brazil to development in Africa was a good example of South-South cooperation; it had included the donation of tablet computers to assist countries in undertaking a digital census. There was a new ongoing initiative under the United Nations Statistical Commission for the development of a financing mechanism on sustainable data, looking at how to improve financing, as significant resources were needed to produce the data required for the Sustainable Development Goals.

45. **Mr. Lewis** (Assistant Director, Institute for Capacity Development, International Monetary Fund) said that a comprehensive approach was important for the themes of statistics and revenue mobilization; issues such as gender, inequality and climate should be fully integrated into the work. Countries could use technology as a vehicle to make significant changes, but it would need to be inserted into a broader institutional framework that was responsive to the needs of the country.

46. **Mr. Chege** (Chair of the United Nations Statistics Commission) said that it was necessary to better coordinate development efforts, and to build capacity in terms of skills, technology and resources.

47. **Ms. Akhtar** (Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) said that taxpayers were very important, but stakeholders also needed to be involved, including the public, the business community and politicians, as tax reform proposals were often shut down at the political level. Responding to the representative of India, she said that resistance to reform was not an issue of sovereignty.

48. **Mr. Hollingworth** (President and Chief Executive Officer of the Grameen Foundation) said that it was necessary to be prepared for data becoming a commodity, as it would become valuable to various actors, particularly in the private sector. Steps must be taken to protect the interests of the poor and to consider government regulation in relation to data.

49. **Mr. Watts** (Senior Analyst of Development Initiatives) said that in a digitized world, it was necessary to move towards using new technologies. The way in which support was provided by development partners had an impact on domestic revenue mobilization. It was important for there to be policy coherence, and development partners needed to look at their wider structures and processes.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.